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JOYOUS JETS

Five more years with Dustin Byfuglien

metroSPORTS

'This is ground zero'

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett BRAEDEN JONES/METRO

Minister hears 'tremendous anger' over missing, murdered indigenous women

metroNEWS

City ends 2015 with surplus

BUDGET

$16.3 million transferred to general purpose reserve fund

Stephanie Taylor
Metro | Winnipeg

The city's surplus has grown yet again, according to a new financial report headed to city hall.

Finance staff report the city ended 2015 with $16.3 million in the black as of Dec. 31.

That's up $5.3 million from the $11-million surplus staff forecast by the end of last November.

"Historically, the fiscal position of the city tends to improve towards the end of the year really through general belt-tightening measures," finance committee chairman Coun. Marty Morantz said Monday.

Staff say the surplus money has since been transferred to the general purpose reserve fund, as per council direction in the event the city found more money in the bank.

"Ultimately, council will decide on how the surplus should be allocated," Morantz said, listing options that include keeping it in a stabilization reserve, or funding programs for the 2016 or future budgets.

"You always rather have a surplus rather than a deficit, certainly. I guess it's one less thing to worry about."

However, Morantz said that surplus could have topped $21 million had public works not overspent in snow removal last December.

"Ultimately, council will decide on how the surplus should be allocated."
Coun. Marty Morantz

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THIS WEEK AT BIRCHWOOD KIA WEST >>

See Page 7

For this week's exclusive offers!

metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Group seeks to 'kill, harm and harass' two threatened species. **Canada**

CURLING

Bonspiel sweeps in nearly $10K

Despite taking place during some freaky weather over the weekend, an annual outdoor curling bonspiel raised more money and hosted more teams than ever before.

The 15th annual Ironman Outdoor Curling Bonspiel raised $9,771 for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, which was just shy of the committee's $10,000 goal.

Spokesperson Lynne Roy said the 80 participating teams also made it the "biggest event" to date, up from 76 last year, but added the committee doesn't plan on stopping the growth.

"Next year we'll have a new target and a new goal," she said of both the fundraising total and teams playing.

"We consistently want to do better."

This year's Ironman Champions are the "Winnipeg Brew Birfs," Kyle Kurz, Colin Kurz, Scott Kurz and Melissa Gordon. METRO

IN BRIEF

Police charge man and woman in murder case

Winnipeg police have charged a man and woman in the death of a 39-year-old woman over the weekend.

Police say that Kashtin Flett and Nikina Houle, both 23, both face charges in the alleged murder of Mavis Ducharme.

Police said both suspects remain in custody. METRO

Actif Epica: A test of human endurance

RACE

Participants bike or trek across snowy, cold Manitoba

After enduring more than 100 kilometres on her bike crossing the Manitoba countryside, through blowing snow and an unrelenting February wind, Andrea Tetrault could no longer feel her hands or feet.

She had reached the city limits of Winnipeg but still had about 20 kilometres to go.

"It was a horrible feeling," Tetrault said.

"Your hands are like blocks of wood. You can't feel anything. You know that's not good for you."

Somehow the 46-year-old mustered every last bit of strength for the home stretch — pedalling, shifting gears and braking without being able to feel any of the motions.

Welcome to Actif Epica — a 130-kilometre race through rural Manitoba in February — testing the ability to embrace, and yet defeat, winter.

For the fifth year, at least 50 participants will head out into the flat, bald wilderness of the Trans Canada Trail on Feb. 13, by foot or on a bike, ready to battle the elements over 24 hours.

"Mentally, it's really tough," said Tetrault, who has done the race three times.

For the fifth year, at least 50 participants will head out into the flat, bald wilderness of the Trans Canada Trail on Feb. 13, by foot or on a bike, ready to battle the elements over 24 hours. CONTRIBUTED/THE CANDIAN PRESS

> **You learn what you're really capable of.**
> Dwayne Sandall

"You're looking at landmarks on the horizon that, after two hours, don't seem any closer because it's so slow."

The race started in 2012 with only 32 brave souls. Last year, it drew just more than 100 people. Some have come from as far away as Brazil and California to take part.

The hardy participants take a bus to St. Malo, south of Winnipeg, where they start at 7 a.m.

They go north to the Red River floodway along the Trans Canada Trail and across open stretches of prairie for 100 kilometres before they hit the outskirts of Winnipeg.

Participants are warned that, although the route is flat, it is far from easy. There are steep climbs across creeks and rivers. The trail surface can vary and include ice, snow and frozen gravel. Snowdrifts in places may exceed one metre.

Runners have 25 hours to finish, while the cyclists have 24. THE CANADIAN PRESS

COURT

Convicted men ask for retrial

Manitoba's top court is mulling over whether it should grant separate retrials to two men convicted in the brutal killing of a Winnipeg drug dealer.

A jury convicted Kristopher Brincheski and Corey Tymchyshyn of first-degree murder in 2014 in connection to the death of Chad Davis.

The men appeared before the Manitoba Court of Appeal on Monday to argue they didn't receive a fair trial.

Davis, 22, disappeared in February of 2008. His remains were found six months later, sealed in a barrel that was recovered by a Lee River-area cottager.

The Crown argued Brincheski and Tymchyshyn lured Davis to the garage of an Elmwood home and fatally beat him.

Brincheski and Tymchyshyn were tried together. Each testified and pointed the finger of blame at each other for killing Davis in what's known as a "cut-throat defence."

Tymchyshyn initially fought to have his murder charge severed from Brincheski's, but his bid was denied in October 2011.

Crown attorney Ami Kotler denied any of the trial evidence was unfair given the cut-throat defence the men ultimately advanced.

"There's no realistic concern the trial judge got the law wrong," said Kotler.

The court reserved its decision.

BAILEY HILDEBRAND/FOR METRO

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Larry Morrissette, left, and James Favel speak to the Winnipeg School Division Monday night. SHANNON VAN RAES/FOR METRO

Catholic school will open, despite clash

GONZAGA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Point Douglas to see private institution by September

Braeden Jones
Metro | Winnipeg

Despite opposition from at least two local indigenous leaders, a private Catholic school will open in Point Douglas — and the Winnipeg School Division says its hands are tied.

Gonzaga Middle School is set to open in September, funded by private donors including members of the Chipman family, who own True North Sports and Entertainment.

"They have every right to set up a charter school if they want to, and there's no way for us to stop them," said Mark Wasyliw, WSD board chair, before delegations were heard on the matter at a special WSD board meeting Monday night.

The school will be tuition-free and teach 60 kids annually from the Point Douglas area.

Students will be selected by local leaders and community members, and the school said it will focus on students who need extra support.

> **"The have every right to set up a charter school if they want to, and there's no way for us to stop them.**
> Mark Wasyliw

Indigenous leaders Larry Morrissette and James Favel say that removing students from their communities to attend private, religiously immersive schools "is what the residential schools did, and it is contrary to what is needed if we are to build healthy communities in the inner city."

They officially voiced their objections Monday, saying they would rather see the $3 million in private funding for the school go to expanding Children of the Earth school.

The two have penned op-eds and have publicly decried Gonzaga Middle School as a step back from what is called for in the recent Truth and Reconciliation Commission report on residential schools.

Wasyliw said they have reached out to the school to partner with them, but have received no response. – WITH FILES FROM ELISHA DACEY

DEVELOPMENT

Building proposal faces rejection — again

Stephanie Taylor
Metro | Winnipeg

A proposal to divide and build a new 65-unit residential building on land in Charleswood could be rejected by a Winnipeg committee for the second time.

City staff rejected a recent proposal by GW Architecture, asking that a 3.75 acre parcel of land on the corner of 4820 Roblin Blvd. and 521 Dieppe Rd. be divided into a 1.27-acre and 2.48-acre lot.

The first lot would consist of an existing church and 28 new parking stalls, while the second would be rezoned to see a three-storey multi-family residential development built, with parking space for 172 vehicles.

A report headed to Tuesday's Assiniboia Community Committee shows these design plans are the second iteration for the proposed development, in which the building's height was slightly reduced, and the parking was redistributed between the two lots.

The committee previously rejected the initial application in January 2014.

According to the report, the committee found "many questions and concerns have not been addressed," in the application, from the site's drainage and waste issues to the development's impact on traffic.

The committee also concurred that the building's height did not "fit within the character of the neighbourhood."

Staff say one of the problems this time around lies within the development's proximity to surrounding homes, which border the site's property lines.

"The proposed development would be the densest development in the neighbourhood if established," the report reads.

Staff recommend the development include a 25-foot wide buffer between the west, south and north property lines, and say although the parking configuration has been revamped to create more space, there is not enough room to support a wider buffer area.

HEARING

A public hearing on the matter is set for Tuesday at 5 p.m.

TRANSIT TUESDAY
Weekly Transit News Update

SUNDAY SERVICE ON LOUIS RIEL DAY
Winnipeg Transit will be operating on a Sunday schedule on Louis Riel Day, February 15. Visit winnipegtransit.com for route and schedule information or contact 311.

MILLENNIUM LIBRARY SERVICE CENTRE
Winnipeg Transit's Millennium Library Customer Service Centre, located at 251 Donald St. (corner of Graham & Donald) is open Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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Anger 'raw' in province

INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Missing and murdered cases focused here: Minister

Braeden Jones
Metro | Winnipeg

A federal minister says Manitobans are angrier about missing and murdered indigenous women than she's found in other provinces so far.

"There seems to be tremendous anger" from the public, said Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett.

Bennett heard stories from affected families while in Winnipeg Monday as part of a cross-Canada tour, meant to glean public input before the federal government conducts a national MMIW inquiry.

"People are concerned about the police, they're concerned about government, and frankly, they were quite skeptical as to whether an inquiry will help at all," she said.

"These were tough messages … We have to obviously do a great deal of work to earn the confidence."

She said the feedback she received Monday was a chorus of voices that keep the federal government in the pursuit of designing an inquiry "that will allow people to feel that they've been heard" and "put in place concrete measures that will stop this terrible tragedy."

Bennett also said Winnipeg has a heightened awareness given the number of MMIW locally, and "because of the death of Tina Fontaine and the near-death of Rinelle Harper."

"This is ground zero," she said. "It's pretty raw here."

Bennett was unable to speak to the scope of the planned inquiry, which she hopes to initiate by the end of winter.

The federal government has committed to spending $40 million on the inquiry over two years.

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett speaks to media in Winnipeg Monday. BRAEDEN JONES/METRO

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Taylor Piskor was badly hurt Jan. 10. GOFUNDME.COM

Supporters rally for girl hit by train

FUNDRAISING

Teen hockey player was in truck with dad when struck

Fundraising continues for a Manitoba girl who was critically injured last month when she and her father were in a truck that was hit by a train.

Taylor Piskor, 15, and her father, Peter, were driving home from Taylor's hockey game on Jan. 10 when their truck was hit near Elie, west of Winning.

Todd Edwards, a spokesman for the family, says Taylor has extensive injuries and remains in critical condition.

Edwards says Peter also sustained injuries to his back and needed surgery for a broken arm.

An exhibition game was held Thursday between Taylor's team, the Capitals, and the Rangers to raise money for her and her family.

"Taylor's condition remains very critical. Her mom and dad remain by her side, and their only focus is on their daughter's desperate battle," Edwards said.

A GoFundMe page has already raised almost $50,000.

Taylor Piskor GOFUNDME.COM

Updates are being posted on the page, telling family and friends of Taylor's progress.

"The family is so unbelievably touched by the outpouring of support, prayers and well wishes. It's truly unbelievable. The hockey community, family and friends have helped keep spirits positive. Taylor is a spunky spirit and has more fight in her," said Dorit Legault, the creator of the GoFundMe page.

> **Taylor's condition remains very critical.**
> Family spokesman Todd Edwards

Hockey Manitoba executive director Peter Woods says it's encouraging to see "tremendous, genuine and heartfelt support from the hockey community for one of our members."

CTV WINNIPEG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

WINNIPEG HUMANE SOCIETY

Fix is in for more felines in February

The Winnipeg Humane Society entered February with the goal of spaying and neutering 500 cats with an affordable $5 fixing program but has already exceeded that goal.

In fact, that many fixings were booked in just one week. Society CEO Javier Schwesensky said the goal has now increased to 1,000 by the end of March.

"We're grateful for the response and hope more people will register," he said.

The program — called Fix 'em February — is available to low- or fixed-income cat owners and is designed to combat overpopulation.

Eligible cat owners can register for their cheap fixing online at winnipeghumanesociety.ca or by phone at 204-888-7627.

METRO

LIBRARIES

Replacement order changes

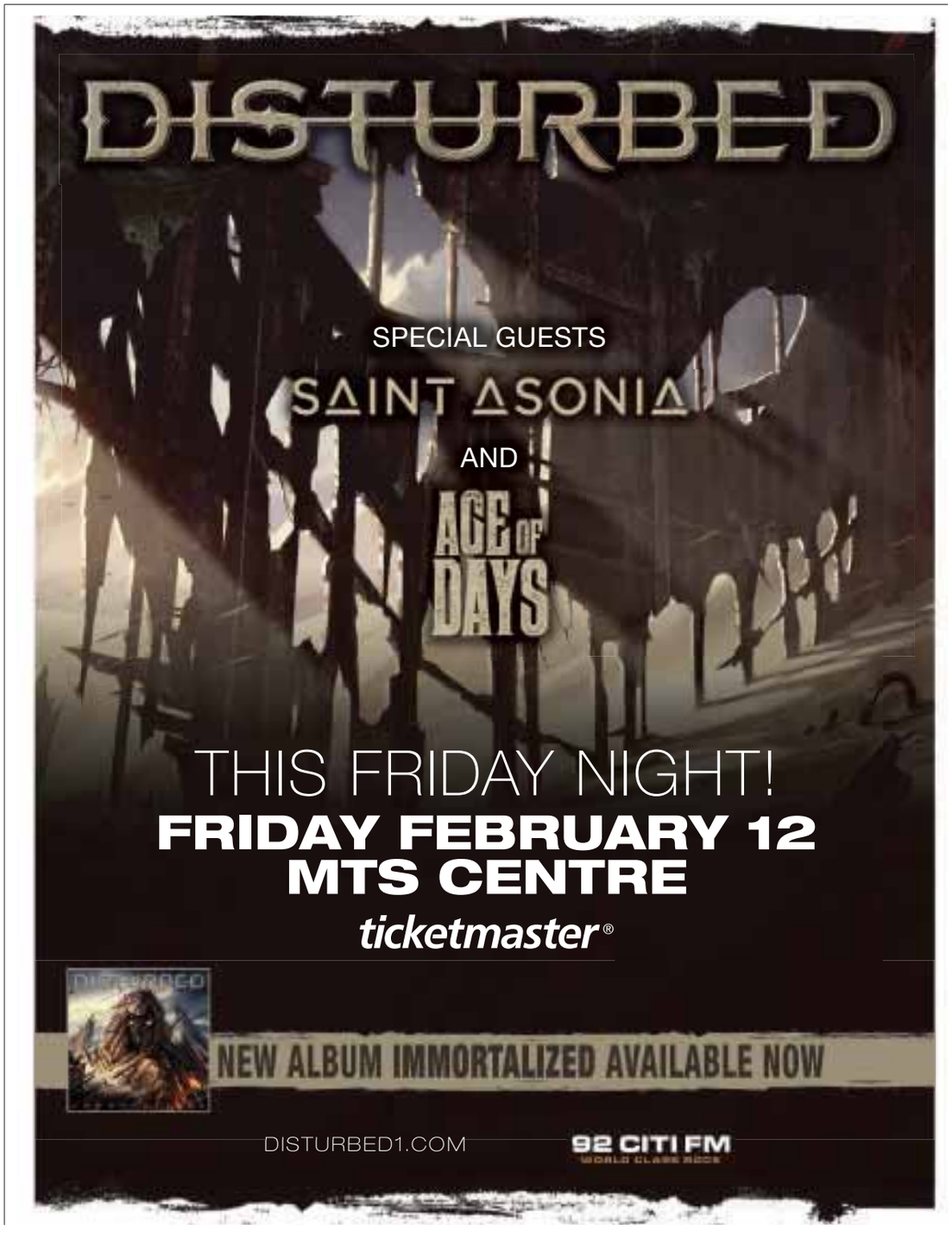
The city is shuffling the order in which it plans to replace some of its aging libraries.

In a report presented Monday to the committee on protection, community services and parks, staff recommended switching the replacement years for West Kildonan and Westwood libraries.

Both the 50-year-old West Kildonan Library and 49-year-old Westwood Library operate in leased facilities. They now would be replaced in 2017 and 2021, respectively.

"Their order of replacement was determined by the ability of the libraries involved to still offer viable service to library users until they were replaced," reads the report.

The report says new West Kildonan Library will be relocated in a more central area of the community, providing users with a "new, fully accessible facility." METRO



Canada declares an end to bombing mission on ISIL

MIDDLE EAST

Trudeau says size of training troops to triple

Canada will end its bombing missions against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) targets within weeks as it moves to triple the size of its training contingent to assist Iraqi forces on the ground.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Monday laid out the Liberal government's new approach to combat ISIL fighters as he announced that Canada will remain engaged until March 31, 2017.

As the Liberals pledged during the election, Trudeau confirmed Monday that the bombing missions by CF-18s will end no later than Feb. 22. However, operations by two surveillance aircraft and an air-to-air refuelling jet will continue.

In its place, Canada will triple the number of the military trainers. The military now has 69 trainers on the ground in northern Iraq.

As well, the government will deploy medical personnel to provide training to Iraqi forces in how to treat battlefield casualties.

Canada will also provide weapons — small arms, ammunition and optics — to help with the training of local forces.

The government also announced it was stepping up its humanitarian aid to assist with the flood of refugees fleeing the violence. Ottawa will earmark $840 million over three years to provide shelter, food, health care and other essentials.

The government said the changes will see the complement of military personnel dedicated to the mission rise to 830, up from 650 now.

The prior Conservatives dispatched the small team of military trainers to Iraq in September 2014. A month later, the Tories announced they were dispatching six CF-18s to begin bombing missions, as well as an air-to-air refueller and two surveillance aircraft to the region to assist in the coalition air campaign.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

This image on a militant website shows fighters in Syria. THE CANADIAN PRESS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

$270M

Budget for improving local capacity in education, health, water and sanitation.

metro EXCLUSIVE

Prof got pension post-death

Joe Lofaro
Metro | Ottawa

Carleton University is trying to recoup nearly half a million dollars paid to the estate of a professor who received pension benefits while he was dead.

The university went to court to recover $497,332 from the estate of George Roseme. He suffered from Alzheimer's when he disappeared in 2007. His whereabouts were a mystery until a dog found his remains in 2013. While he was presumed missing, Roseme's friend and ex-girlfriend, Lynne Threlfall, was appointed tutor to the absentee and oversaw the monthly payment to his bank account. She was to receive payments for a maximum of seven years. Under the Civil Code of Quebec, Roseme was to be presumed alive for seven years, "unless proof of death is made."

A Superior Court of Quebec judge ruled Threlfall received payments in "error" after a 2014 coroner's report declared the date of death as Sept. 11, 2007 — two days after he went missing.

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OTTAWA

Developer wants to 'kill, harm, harass'

A request by an Ottawa development group to be allowed to "kill, harm and harass" two threatened species and destroy a butternut tree habitat on its land has garnered attention.

Kanata Lakes North Development Group put in a request for an "overall benefit permit" to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry on Jan. 4, asking for permission to:

- remove up to 120 butternut trees (endangered) on the 140 hectare site, and damage and destroy the habitat of these trees;
- kill, harm and harass Blanding's turtles (threatened) and destroy up to 124 hectares of Blanding's turtle habitat;
- kill, harm and harass Least bitterns (threatened) and damage up to 10.9 hectares of Least bittern habitat in order to construct a residential development.

While this drew alarm from residents and city councillor Marianne Wilkinson, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry employee Scott Lee said the application is unremarkable.

"If they weren't looking to impact a species at risk, then they wouldn't require a permit ... from us," said Lee.

However, what further alarmed residents like Mario Poirier, a member of the Ottawa Duck Club and wetland supporter, is that KNL's application doesn't say how it will achieve an overall benefit for the species they are impacting.

The permit will only be given if the proponent can show that not only is the impact minimized, but that there is an overall benefit for the species, said Lee.

The request for an overall benefit permit is posted online as a summary. It is only after the comment stage that the ministry extracts promises from the proponent before a permit is given.

While impacts to the species on site have to be minimized, "overall benefit" can happen in different ways, including some of the ways KNL has mentioned.

ADAM KVETON/METROLAND MEDIA

KNL Group are asking for permission to "kill, harm and harass" Blanding's turtles like this one. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

IN BRIEF

Mi'kmaq leader decries P.E.I. park honouree

It's a "grave insult" that a national park in Prince Edward Island still bears the name of a military general who wanted to kill aboriginal people with smallpox, says a Mi'kmaq leader.

John Joe Sark says the name of 18th-century British military commander Jeffery Amherst should be removed from the Port-la-Joye-Fort Amherst historic site near Charlottetown.

"Why should they name any public place after a barbarian and a tyrant that this guy was?" he said Monday.

He has written to the federal government in a bid that adds fuel to an ongoing debate about how historic figures are honoured across Canada and the U.S. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Day 5 in Ghomeshi trial

Jian Ghomeshi's sex assault trial heard that two of the women who testified discussed the allegations in thousands of messages before and after going to police. One woman testified that Ghomeshi bit her shoulder and put his hands around her neck as they made out. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Diner's wall a who's-who

NEW HAMPSHIRE PRIMARY

Staff recalls run-ins with would-be U.S. presidents

These diner waitresses carry anecdotes of presidential candidates like so many plates of barbecued steak tips and Hungry Boy Specials.

The wall of pictures attests to the famous names who have wandered into MaryAnn's Diner over the years: Bill Clinton, Al Gore, Rudy Giuliani, John McCain, Chris Christie and, just the other day, Jeb and Barbara Bush.

One customer eating a corned-beef hash says he saw Hillary Clinton twice last week.

Welcome to New Hampshire.

Being a small state that hosts an early primary means that, every fourth February, residents see their main streets, eateries and gyms inundated with people aspiring to lead the free world.

The women reminisce about their all-time favourite customer. It's a landslide: the 42nd president, who worked table after table and then, when he was finished, went outside and did the same thing down the block.

"Bill Clinton," said manager Linda Guilnet, who's worked at the diner since its 1989 opening.

A few towns away, another New Hampsherite is less impressed that Bush hauled out the family. Ari Pollack says he's been considering voting for Bush, but thinks leaning on mom smacks slightly of desperation.

Pollack has seen five different candidates in this election cycle. He would have seen a sixth, but the Hillary Clinton rally was full and he couldn't get in.

Some will be thrilled to see it conclude. The waitresses complain about media cameras bumping into customers.

Pollack is less cynical. He says his state has an important responsibility: "We're making a decision for the rest of the nation. To at least help narrow the field, to put some candidates in front of the rest of the nation that have been vetted," he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

1 Newlywed Syrian couple Nada Merhi, 18, and Hassan Youssef, 27, have their wedding photos taken in a heavily damaged building in the war-ravaged city of Homs on Feb. 5.

2 Hassan offers Nada a bouquet of flowers as she salutes him in the midst of destruction.

JOSEPH EID/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

SYRIA

Love in the time of war

Badly damaged buildings in the war-ravaged Syrian city of Homs is the setting of a young couple's wedding pictures.

Newlyweds Nada Merhi, 18, and her husband, Syrian army soldier Hassan Youssef, 27, posed for a series of pictures on Feb. 5 among the ruins of what is left of Homs's streets and buildings after years of civil war.

Merhi wore a traditional white wedding gown. Youssef, a soldier in Syrian President Bashar Assad's army, according to multiple media outlets, wore a military uniform.

The Washington Post identified the Syrian wedding photographer as Jafar Meray. He used the destruction of Homs to his advantage "to show that life is stronger than death," according to AFP photographer Joseph Eid, who accompanied the couple and Meray on the shoot.

On his Facebook page, he explained that the photographs were proof that "life goes on, silently." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

TECHNOLOGY

Cockroach bots could save lives

The little cockroach, among nature's most gross and reviled creatures, could soon be saving lives. Well, a cockroach-inspired robot, that is.

A study published Monday in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences says robots that mimic cockroaches could help search-and-rescue missions to find survivors.

"Cockroaches are fascinating," said Robert Full, a biologist at the University of California, Berkeley, and one of the study's authors.

Full and Kaushik Jayaram, a post-doctoral engineering student at Harvard University, and the other author of the study found it was able to slip through gaps a quarter its standing height and could withstand loads of nearly 900 times its body weight. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

An American cockroach atop a compressible robot.

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HOUSEHOLD DEBT

Interest rate not only tool: BoC

The Bank of Canada's benchmark interest rate needs help in shoring up the financial system from growing risks like rising consumer indebtedness, deputy governor Timothy Lane said in a speech Monday.

Increased government spending, also known as fiscal stimulus, and regulatory changes to curb the accumulation of household debt are other tools that can be used alongside monetary policy, Lane said. "One thing is clear: monetary policy alone cannot be responsible for maintaining financial stability," he said in a speech at the HEC Montreal business school.

Lane said the central bank has identified the combination of climbing household debt and elevated house prices as the financial system's most concerning vulnerability.

This weak spot has been exacerbated by the use of monetary policy, which has led to an extended era of low interest rates. The bank has repeatedly warned that indebtedness, and its associated risks, have continued to inch higher.

This creates a scenario where government spending can be used to stimulate the economy, particularly at a time of cheap borrowing rates, Lane said.

He warned, however, that at a certain point expanding public debt can have its own negative effects on the economy and the financial system.

"But these costs need to be set against concerns that prolonged monetary policy stimulus may result in an excessive buildup of private-sector vulnerabilities," he said.

On Monday, Lane also highlighted other measures that can help shield the financial system, such as the tightened mortgage financing rules introduced in recent years.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Shoppers check out the Nordstrom store in Calgary. The U.S. retailer is expanding its presence in Canada with three new locations in Toronto this year and next. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Battle for shoppers

RETAIL

Clothing sector faces challenging years ahead

Artist sketch of the new Saks department stores, opening in Toronto this spring. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Industry watchers say Canada's retail clothing sector is expected to slow in the coming few years, even though the battle for luxury shoppers is revving up.

After two years of growth approaching four per cent, sales are forecast to slow and bottom out to a mere one per cent increase in 2018, says Trendex North America, a marketing research firm specializing in the clothing industry.

This year's sales are expected to grow by 2.4 per cent versus 3.8 per cent last year, slipping to 1.7 per cent growth in 2017 before inching back up to 2.1 per cent growth in 2020, Trendex said in a 2016 retail apparel market forecast.

The low Canadian dollar is going to put pressure on retailers' margins and force them to offset higher costs by hiking prices, perhaps by three to five per cent.

But the luxury segment should help ease the sluggishness in the low- to mid-priced sector as Saks Fifth Avenue makes its Canadian entry this month with the opening of two Toronto stores and U.S. retailer Nordstrom expands its presence with three new locations in Toronto this year and next.

The openings will give wealthier Canadians a reason to shop at home instead of travelling to global fashion centres such as New York while also attracting Americans looking to take advantage of the low loonie, she said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

National Bank to write off investment in Maple Bank

National Bank says it will write off the $165-million value of its investment in Maple Financial Group, which operates Maple Bank in Germany. Maple Bank's business activities were suspended on the weekend by Germany's regulator. THE CANADIAN PRESS

market minute

DOLLAR 71.77¢ (–0.13¢)

TSX 12,535.40 (–228.59)

OIL $29.69 US (–$1.20)

GOLD $1,197.90 US (+$40.20)

NATURAL GAS: $2.140 US (+7.7¢)
DOW JONES: 16,027.05 (–177.92)

February 8–14

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February 13

Folklorama talent

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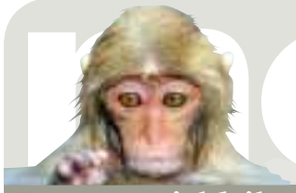
metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Tuesday, February 9, 2016



Simian sailors
Newfound fossils suggest monkeys arrived in the Americas from Africa 40 million years ago, meaning they floated across the Atlantic for 15 days or more.

BRUCE BENNET/GETTY IMAGES

Visible signs of inclusion are integral steps in abolishing the bias, fear and ignorance that lead to homophobia. Pride Tape is a simple, easy and low-cost way of announcing your support for the LGBTQ community.

— BRIAN BURKE

The Burke family is always looking for ways to show our support for the LGBTQ community. I was very excited when I met Jeff McLean, investor in Pride Tape, and thrilled when the Edmonton Oilers used it during their skills competition. We can't wait to bring it to Calgary once it is fully in production.

Visible signs of inclusion like these are integral steps in abolishing the bias, fear and ignorance that lead to homophobia. Through amazing initiatives and organizations such as Pride Tape, Pride parades, You Can Play and Canadian Safe Schools Network, steady progress is being made.

Pride Tape is cool because it's a simple, easy and low-cost way of announcing your support for the LGBTQ community in a team sports environment — the very message that You Can Play carries forward every day.

This issue has been vitally important to me since my late son, Brendan, came out to us all. Brendan was a wonderful young man and he came out in a very public and courageous way.

Since we lost Brendan, our family has been dedicated to furthering the causes and goals of the LGBTQ community. I am only sorry that this wasn't a priority for me much earlier in my life.

People ask me how they can help. I always tell them the same thing: Take three steps in your life. First, practice and teach acceptance in your home and workplace. The best thing about Brendan coming out was that I didn't have to take anything back. No hatred was allowed in my house. No racial humor, no homophobic language — nothing allowed. It was the same at work.

Work actively to end homophobia and bullying. Intervene if you can; report it if you can't.

Second, take a positive, affirmative step on behalf of the group — join PFLAG, You Can Play or the Canadian Safe Schools Network. Volunteer. Write a cheque. Join a Gay-Straight Alliance. March in a Pride Parade. Engage with your local LGBTQ community. It's easy to say that you care — prove it!

And finally, work actively to end homophobia and bullying. Intervene if you can; report it if you can't.

I long for the day when these badges of honor and acceptance on behalf of the LGBTQ community are no longer necessary. But sadly, right now, they are. Join us in this fight against bias, fear and ignorance!

Brian Burke is the president of hockey operations for the Calgary Flames. He was the general manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs from 2008 to 2013. He is on the advisory board of You Can Play, which promotes LGBTQ inclusion in Canadian sports.

METRO CALL TO ACTION

#PrideTape picks up steam

The colourful campaign to banish homophobia from hockey has support in high places — from NHL executives to generous investors — but it's up to Metro readers to help keep the movement in motion.

The Pride Tape Kickstarter campaign was a smashing success: It closed Feb. 4 after raising $76,147. Soon 10,000 rolls of rainbow-hued tape, a powerful symbol of LGBTQ inclusion in sports, will be on their way to hockey teams.

Kris Wells, a professor at the University of Alberta's Institute of Sexual Minority Studies and Services who spearheaded the Pride Tape initiative, told Metro seven NHL teams have contacted the campaign directly or indirectly to inquire about the tape. So far, just the Edmonton Oilers have displayed their multicoloured pride on the ice, during a skills competition.

CONTRIBUTED

Do the coaches, players and hockey fans in your community know about Pride Tape? Spread the word!

Do you want your local teams — professional and amateur— to get on board with Pride Tape? Share this story on social media: #PrideTape

metroview

The best voting reform idea you've never heard of

Norm Beach
For Metro

Our first-past-the-post electoral system is widely and justifiably criticized. After all, if you're a Tory in downtown Toronto or a Green supporter anywhere in Canada except Vancouver Island, it seems futile to cast an essentially "wasted" vote.

So millions stay home while millions of others hold their noses and choose someone they don't really want in order to deny power to someone they hate.

But there's a system under which voters could have their choices directly reflected in Parliament, without adding more MPs, altering electoral districts or setting off a Meech Lake-esque constitutional battle.

It's called proportional parliamentary voting (PPV) and, like proportional representation, it's premised on the idea that each party's legislative power should be in proportion to its share of the popular vote.

Under PPV, when the House of Commons votes on an issue, MPs stand and vote individually, as they always have. But any party whose share of the popular vote is greater than its share of seats is awarded additional votes (on paper only — there are no additional MPs).

If this system had been put in place for this Parliament, the Liberals would not have a majority. Instead, the PPV formula would be pegged to the 184 Grit MPs who received about 40 per cent of the popular vote, yielding a House of Commons consisting of 460 total votes, with 231 required for a majority. The 99 Conservative MPs, who received 32 per cent of the popular vote, would be awarded 48 additional parliamentary votes for a Conservative total of 147. (The NDP would have 92 votes; the Bloc, 23, the Greens, 14.)

We'd say goodbye to false majority governments, strategic voting and "wasted" votes. Everywhere in Canada, every vote would help the party the voter chooses get more power in Parliament. The only exception would be votes for parties with no MPs in the resulting Parliament. (Fewer than one per cent of such votes went to such parties last time.)

It would not be a difficult process. The Parliament of Canada Act gives the House of Commons the exclusive power to establish its rules and procedures. It could make this change at the end of its mandate, so it would apply to the next Parliament. This change would not affect the electoral system, so if Canadians don't want first-past-the-post, reforms such as ranked balloting would still be possible.

Clearly, though, proportional parliamentary voting would be a better way to guarantee that no vote is wasted. For the next election, let's finally make every vote count.

Norm Beach is a Toronto-based teacher and writer.

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Saving through uncertainty

NEST EGG

Putting some money away when income isn't steady

Michelle Williams

Not everyone has a job with a regular paycheque and benefits, including a group savings plan. In fact, in today's economy, more and more investors are dealing with instability in their workplace, forcing them to be committed and creative about saving for their retirement.

Proper investment advice can help you plan for retirement even when your earnings are inconsistent. ISTOCK

Working on contract

Ana Pereira, 46, is a project manager who is currently part-way through a five-month contract with Canadian Tire. She earns good money when she's working, but there are sometimes weeks or months between contracts where she has no income.

Pereira owns her home and has worked diligently to pay down her mortgage quickly. She also has a car and some RSP and TFSA savings. While she'd prefer a permanent position because of her financial commitments, the right opportunity has not yet come along.

She admits that during periods of unemployment between contracts, it's difficult to keep her head above water without dipping into savings.

According to Guy Anderson, senior financial consultant at Investment Planning Counsel, someone in Pereira's position should consider using some of the funds she's putting toward her mortgage to top up her TFSA and RSP savings and extend her mortgage payments over a longer period.

"That way, she has a safety net should she have periods of low cash flow due to unemployment between contracts," Anderson says.

Owning a small business

Lynton Friedman, 41, is a registered psychotherapist who practices hypnotherapy. He also owns Sanlyn Wellness Centre in Thornhill, Ont., teaching clients techniques to reduce anxiety, relax and break bad habits.

He's been in business for over 10 years and has recently gone through a period of high growth, but like any service business, there are some months where cash flow is low. While putting money back into his business is important to him, Friedman appreciates the need to be saving for his retirement.

"(He) is at a key time in his life and career to start making some serious strides in his retirement savings," says Anderson. He suggests Friedman talk to his advisor about leveraging RSP savings and the federal government's Home Buyers' Plan so he can purchase his first home.

"He can direct $25,000 from his RSP toward his home without tax penalty if he pays it back over 15 years," Anderson says.

Freelancing

Matthew Davies, 51, a freelance TV and film composer, experiences ups and downs in income due to music royalties. A few years back, he had a very good income year — but that came with big tax implications. His strategy was to put money into his RSP for the tax deferral, and he also purchased a spousal RSP, since his wife, Ginette, 43, was a stay-at-home mom.

Royalties are dwindling due to changes in the television industry, so Davies and his wife have opened a "spy birthday party" company, Undercover Kids. With startup costs and shrinking music royalties, cash flow continues to be a challenge while they get their new business going.

For them, Anderson suggests, their RSP savings are a handy emergency fund.

"Since three years have passed since the spousal RSP contribution, they can take it out and use it to help with their personal and business expenses," he says. "Because Ginette's income is still not very high, the taxes they're paying on the RSP withdrawal are minimal."

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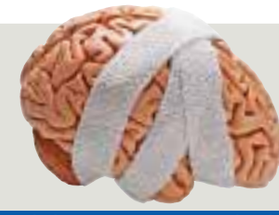

Concussion raises long-term suicide risk in adults, new research shows

Delivering birth canal benefits

RESEARCH

Study may have found way to reduce risks to C-section babies

GOOD GERMS By swabbing infants with birth fluids immediately after delivery by C-section, researchers found they could modify skin microbiota.

Babies delivered by C-section have a greater risk of developing asthma, allergies, Type 1 diabetes and obesity. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

While passing through the birth canal, newborns are bathed in a mixture of their mothers' bacteria believed to play a role in boosting their immune systems and preventing disease.

So the implications for infants born by caesarean — who don't acquire those important microbes — has been a concern at a time when C-section rates have been rising, accounting for about 28 per cent of Canadian births.

Now a pilot study in the journal Nature Medicine has found there may be a solution.

Researchers reported they successfully transferred the immune-building microbial communities of mothers to their caesarean-born babies by swabbing them with birth fluids immediately after delivery.

"Our study is the first to demonstrate that partial microbiome restoration just after birth is possible in babies born by C-section," said microbiologist Maria Dominguez-Bello, associate professor at New York University's Langone Medical Center and lead author of the study, published last week.

While the study is small, involving only 18 mothers and babies, the results provide important evidence that the principle of transferring healthy bacteria is feasible, added co-author Jose Clemente, associate professor with the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York.

By swabbing the infants immediately after delivery, "we can modify this skin-like microbiota that C-section babies usually get and make it resemble the microbiota of vaginally delivered infants," he said.

Over the first month of life, they found "significant differences" in the bacterial communities of those infants versus the babies born by caesarean but not swabbed.

This is not a procedure currently available for hospital births.

But the research lays the groundwork for future studies to see whether this kind of intervention can reduce the risks of developing such conditions as asthma, allergies, Type 1 diabetes and obesity, which have been associated with caesarean birth.

The pilot study included seven babies born vaginally and 11 by caesarean.

Four of the C-section babies had their mouths and bodies swabbed immediately after delivery with sterile gauze incubated in the mother's vagina an hour before surgery. The research team collected more than 1,500 samples from anal, oral and skin sites from mothers and babies over the next 30 days that they analyzed and compared.

The procedure included careful screening to ensure mothers were not carrying potentially harmful bacteria such as streptococcus B or other infectious bacteria or viruses.

The samples are part of a larger ongoing research project that includes 84 moms and babies who will be followed for a year after birth, said Dominguez-Bello.

But her team felt their initial findings should be reported earlier.

Research suggests that the first 100 days of life are crucial for developing a healthy gut bacteria, says Dr. Stuart Turvey, pediatrician at B.C. Children's Hospital and the University of British Columbia who has conducted researcher with the Canadian Microbiome Initiative.

So the study's findings that it's possible to change the structure of the microbial community in a baby's gut by intervening at birth is encouraging, he said.

It opens the door for researchers to identify healthy bacteria that might prevent diseases such as asthma and think about how to administer those to babies, he added.

"What's exciting about these strategies is they're looking to prevent disease."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

FITNESS

True or false: Fitness experts dissect five workout clichés

We asked personal trainers and fitness pros — Kathleen Trotter, Stephanie Joanne and Sarah Robichaud — to separate fact from fiction.

No pain, no gain

Totally false. Fitness experts say pain is a sign something is going wrong — maybe it's your form, or you're pushing yourself too hard. Whatever the case, it's not a good thing.

"The idea of negative, harmful pain being positive is never true," says Trotter.

You don't have to be sore the next day either to get results, adds Joanne. "It's almost the opposite of what I would want anyone to do," she says.

It's all about knowing the line between pushing your body to its limits and feeling that muscle sensation, versus real pain that comes from hurting yourself during a workout.

Feel the burn

Sometimes true. There's pain (bad) and then there's that burning sensation that often accompanies a workout (not necessarily bad.) It's fine to push yourself to the point of fatigue during exercise, says Robichaud.

"I know I'm fatigued when I feel that burning sensation in my body — the lactic acid build-up — but never to the point of pain or sacrificing your form," she adds.

Feeling the "burn" isn't necessary to see results, notes Joanne, but it can provide a psychological boost.

You are what you eat

Mostly true. If you're opting for cake instead of broccoli, you'll definitely feel different after. But experts say the truth is more nuanced that this cliché.

"If you're eating foods that are heavy and fat-laden, and sugar-laden, you are going to feel heavy and you will develop fat on your body," says Robichaud.

And, if you're spending time in the gym but not eating well, you won't get results, adds Joanne.

However, if your digestive system is out of whack, that might mean you're not getting nutrients properly — regardless of what you eat — says Trotter.

It never gets easier — you just get stronger

Sometimes true. This cliché depends on the situation, says Trotter. A beginner runner, for instance, might run 5 kilometres in 40 minutes.

"In a year, hopefully you can run it in 30 minutes, and that's going to feel like what you've done in 40," she says. "It's easier — because you're more fit."

When you're pumping iron, things get easier as you strengthen your muscles. "As you tear up muscle fibres in your workout, and then you recover, they come back together even stronger," says Robichaud. The stronger you get, the harder you can work – so in that sense, it's never getting any easier.

The only bad workout is no workout

Totally true. All three of the experts agreed. "Any movement, even if you just go for a walk and get yourself out of that sedentary mindset, is better than nothing," says Joanne.

In the fitness world, there's a constant pursuit of perfection, but Trotter says people need to shake that — it's not about the "perfect" workout, since something is better than nothing.

"You'll never regret being active," adds Robichaud.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ease screen strain with gentle eye yoga

If you spend more than two hours a day in front of a computer, you are at risk of developing computer vision syndrome, a group of vision-related problems that stem from computer use. Symptoms include: tired, itchy, irritated eyes; blurred vision and even headaches. This simple eye-yoga routine is designed to keep computer vision syndrome at bay. YUMEE CHUNG/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

EYESIGHT RESPITE

1. Sit tall with your head positioned over the shoulders and chin level with the floor. Fix your gaze at least six metres away.
2. Raise your eyes and gaze skyward for a slow inhale and an equally slow exhale. Lower your eyes and gaze at the earth for another full breath cycle.
3. Turn your eyes to the left and to the right, pausing to breathe at each location.
4. Vigorously rub your hands together until they heat up. Then lightly cup the warm palms over your closed eyes. Breathe deeply and relax into the soothing space behind your eyelids for at least five measured breaths.
5. Finish by using your hands to wipe down the face, throat and chest before blinking the eyes open and closed a few times.

12
The average person blinks 12 times per minute, but computer users blink only five times a minute.

JOHANNA SCHNELLER **WHAT I'M WATCHING**

Younger's sly laughs ring true

THE SHOW: Younger, Season One, Episode 3 (E/TV Land)
THE MOMENT: The Laugh

In Younger, Sutton Foster, left, plays a woman who gets to relive her 20s — and savour them this time. CONTRIBUTED

Liza (Sutton Foster) and Josh (Nico Tortorella) are finally kissing. She likes him, but she's been resisting this, because she has a secret. Divorced, broke, she was unable to get a job in book publishing until she began posing as someone his age, 26. She's 40.

The kissing escalates. Josh takes off his shirt. He's slim, muscular, covered in interesting tattoos. Liza bursts out laughing.

That laugh — equal parts nervous, amazed (that's how men look now?), and rueful (Liza and her husband had stopped having sex) — is what keeps Younger on the right side of the ridiculous/fun axis.

Show creator Darren Star (Sex and the City) traffics in frothy fantasies, and this one is a whopper: that a woman who rushed into adulthood can relive her 20s, and savour them this time. (Complete with a hipster wardrobe from SATC's costumer, Pat Field.)

Younger has its groaners. The 20-year-olds can be reductively narcissistic, the 40-year-olds bitter or clueless. But as he did on SATC, Star sneaks in several sly truths per episode about how our society pits women against one another, and makes us into our own worst enemies. "She's hit her head on the glass ceiling so many times she's got dementia," a 20-something says about her boss — a funny line, and a state many women know too well.

I also laughed at this one: "Dating in your 40s is like trying to rent out a beautiful apartment where a murder took place. Everyone is spooked." There was rue in my laugh, too.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

STUDY

Women more likely to 'catch' yawns

A study published in the journal, Royal Society Open Science, by a group of researchers from the University of Pisa, Italy, suggests that although women and men yawn "spontaneously" at the same rate, women are more likely than men to "catch" yawns.

In other words women are more likely to yawn right after someone else near them has.

"We demonstrated that yawn contagion is gender affected," said Elisabetta Palagi, a behavioural biologist, and co-author of the study, over the phone.

Palagi and her team believe that women are more likely to catch yawns than men because they are more empathetic and attuned to people's emotions.

The team covertly observed more than a thousand bouts of yawning over a five-year period in train stations, airports and on the street, without people being aware that they were watched.

"We typed in mobile phones or wrote on notebooks, every yawn that was emitted by each person, the time and who could perceive it," wrote researcher Elisa Demuru in an email.

The researchers even used their own friends as guinea pigs, secretly monitoring their yawns when they came over for dinner and drinks. "They were at my house, so, no problem. It is (a) very, very cheap," way of doing research, said Palagi.

The paper also found that people are more likely to catch yawns from friends, family or coworkers, than strangers.

It's not the first study to explore how empathy effects yawn contagion. A 2015 Baylor University study found that psychopaths, who are known to have less empathy, are less likely to catch yawns than other people.

"Yawning is contagious but why we spontaneously yawn it is another story," she said. "It is extremely difficult to understand."

She calls it, a "subtle and unconscious" form of communication. "When we are all together around the table for dinner and one or two people around the table begin to yawn, and the other ones follow them, OK it's time to go to bed."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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The Knicks fired coach Derek Fisher who accumulated a 40-96 record in a season and a half in New York

Buff shows 'maturity' by committing to Jets

NHL

Valued D-man off market after signing 5-year extension

Big Buff is off the NHL free-agent market.

NHL teams looking to add a rental defenceman before the trade deadline will have to look elsewhere as the Winnipeg Jets signed Dustin Byfuglien to a $38-million US, five-year extension.

The 30-year-old Byfuglien will be part of the Jets' long-range plan at a salary-cap hit of $7.6 million and is relieved he doesn't have to worry about finding a new landing spot this summer as an unrestricted free agent.

"It never really crossed my mind going anywhere," Byfuglien said. "You can't win a Stanley Cup overnight. It's a process, and I feel they're in the right state, so I thought I'd run with them."

Byfuglien was at the forefront of the Jets' first playoff appearance last spring in their fourth season in Winnipeg.

At six-foot-five and 260 pounds, Byfuglien is a unique two-way force who can put up points, defend and deliver big hits.

That combination would have made him sought-after ahead of the Feb. 29 deadline. It also makes him a valuable piece of Winnipeg's present and future.

Jets general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff, who was in Chicago's front office when the Blackhawks traded Byfuglien as part of a cap crunch, believes off-ice maturation is as important as his on-ice contributions.

32

Number of points Dustin Byfuglien has for the Jets this season (15 goals and 17 assists).

"To see him grow into the family man that he is, he's got a wonderful family, proud to call Winnipeg his home for the foreseeable future here — those are the things of maturity," Cheveldayoff said.

"He's obviously a very smart hockey player that has unique abilities on the ice. But I think it's that maturation of a person that has allowed him to understand how he can take his games to other levels, as well."

Byfuglien has 15 goals and 17 assists this season, and those 32 points have him tied for 13th among defencemen. He leads the Jets with an average ice time of 24:14 and believes his best hockey is ahead of him.

"As the years have gone by, I feel every year I've gotten a little bit better and better, matured more and figured out how to be a pro better," said Byfuglien, who has been named an all-star twice since coach Paul Maurice moved him back to the blue line full time.

With Byfuglien off the board, Dan Hamhuis of the Vancouver Canucks and Keith Yandle of the New York Rangers are among the top rental defencemen available. One of the top pending free agent forwards available is Jets captain Andrew Ladd.

Cheveldayoff didn't want to comment on where negotiations stand with Ladd.

The Jets are last in the Central Division with 49 points but have short- and long-term playoff aspirations after making it last season, and the Ladd situation is the next big decision for the franchise with Byfuglien signed.

"There's lots of pieces to the puzzle," Cheveldayoff said.

"You don't deal with any one thing in a singular fashion. There's lots of moving parts behind the scenes that obviously we have got a lot of work to do ahead of us."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Winnipeg's Dustin Byfuglien is a family man who is happy staying in Winnipeg as he believes the Jets can achieve great things. BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

Dustin Byfuglien
GETTY IMAGES

ONE-GAME BAN FOR STAFFORD

The NHL has suspended Winnipeg Jets forward Drew Stafford for one game for high-sticking Colorado Avalanche defenceman Nick Holden. The incident occurred during Winnipeg's 4-2 win in Denver on Saturday. Stafford was assessed a double-minor penalty for high-sticking. He will forfeit $23,387.10 US in salary and will miss Winnipeg's game Tuesday night in St. Louis. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

Crosby back atop weekly honours

Sidney Crosby's torrid scoring streak has earned him NHL first star of the week honours.

The Pittsburgh captain had five goals and three assists in three games last week, extending his point streak to 10 games.

10

Crosby entered Monday with a 10-game point streak.

Crosby's week was highlighted by his ninth career hat trick, with an assist, in Pittsburgh's 6-5 win over Ottawa on Tuesday.

He had a goal and two assists in a 3-2 overtime win over Florida on Saturday, giving him 902 career points. He reached the 900-point mark in his 677th career game. Only 10 players in NHL history have reached that milestone quicker.

Ottawa defenceman Erik Karlsson was named second star with seven assists in three games. Florida centre Vincent Trocheck took third-star honours with three goals and three assists in three games.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Agent confirms Lynch will retire

When Marshawn Lynch was brought to Seattle early in the 2010 season, he was acquired because the Seahawks desperately needed a running back.

What he ended up providing was an attitude and style that became the foundation for bringing the first Super Bowl title to the Pacific Northwest.

And for that, Lynch will forever hold a special place with the Seahawks.

Without saying a word — big surprise — Lynch drew a lot of attention during the fourth quarter of the Super Bowl on Sunday night with a single post on social media. Just a picture, green cleats hanging from a power or telephone line, and a peace sign emoji. It was his way of saying goodbye from football, a decision that his agent Doug Hendrickson confirmed to The Associated Press on Monday saying Lynch intends to retire.

Marshawn Lynch
GETTY IMAGES

Lynch, 29, will step aside after nine seasons in the league. Six of those came in Seattle, where he played in the post-season five times. He tied for the NFL lead in rushing touchdowns in 2013 and 2014 and is No. 8 all-time in total yards rushing during the post-season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL IN BRIEF

Lawyer: Manziel ruptured ex's eardrum in assault

Johnny Manziel's ex-girlfriend says in an affidavit that he hit her so hard during a late-night confrontation that she lost hearing in one ear.

Colleen Crowley suffered a ruptured eardrum, which is expected to eventually heal, her lawyer revealed.

Crowley detailed Manziel's alleged attack as part of proceedings to obtain a protective order against the troubled Cleveland Browns quarterback.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

McCoy being investigated over fight with off-duty cops

Buffalo Bills running back LeSean McCoy is under investigation over a Philadelphia nightclub brawl early Sunday that left two off-duty police officers injured, one with a broken nose and broken ribs and the other with a possible skull fracture.

The incident occurred early Sunday morning after an argument broke out between McCoy's party and the officers over a bottle of champagne.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RECIPE Roasted Chicken and Grapes

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

This unusual combination delivers amazing flavour, both savoury and sweet. It's posh enough to serve to guests but simple enough to whip up on any weeknight evening.

Ready in
Prep time: 5 minutes
Total time: 30 minutes
Serves 4

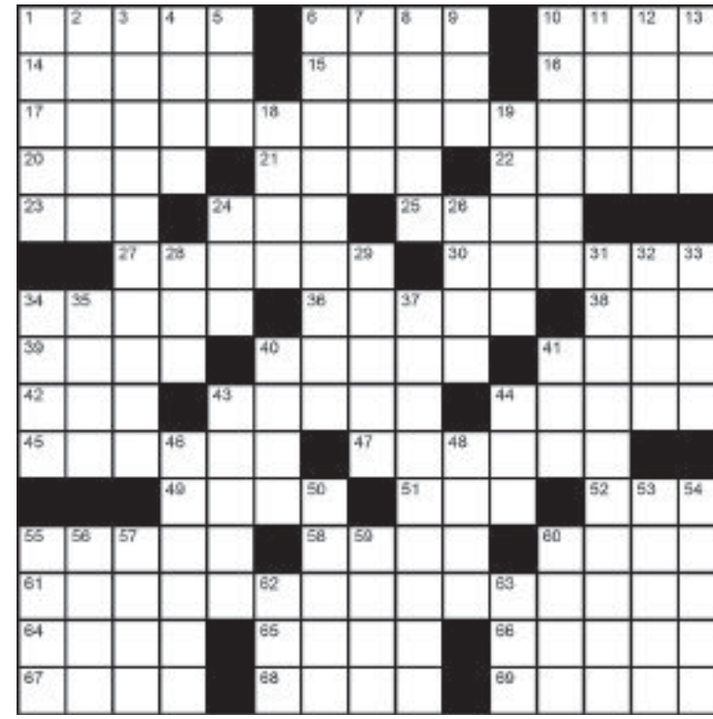
Ingredients
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 chicken thighs
- 2 shallots, sliced
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 3 cups red seedless grapes
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp dried thyme

Directions
1. Preheat the oven to 400 F.
2. In a large, oven-safe skillet, warm up olive oil over medium high heat. Brown — but don't cook through — the chicken thighs, about 3 minutes each side. Remove the chicken from the skillet and place on a clean plate.
3. Reduce the heat under the skillet to medium and toss in the shallots and garlic. Cook for about 3 minutes until they soften. Add the grapes, stock, vinegar, sugar and thyme and give everything a good stir. Allow the sauce to begin to simmer.
4. Nestle the chicken pieces into the sauce and place the skillet in the oven. Bake for 20 minutes.
5. Serve over couscous, mashed potatoes or polenta.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Domesticated
6. Vroom, vroom... __ 500
10. Radiate
14. Ms. Cara
15. Drill hole
16. When Jimmy Kimmel is on
17. First World War munitions: 2 wds.
20. Route
21. Aloud
22. Elongated circles
23. Cobbler's tool
24. __ Epstein (Gregory Smith's role on "Rookie Blue" on Global TV)
25. Animal-powered plow contraption
27. "Would you stop already.": 2 wds.
30. Hertz pickup
34. Curved music symbols
36. Elizabeth's nickname, perhaps
38. Annie Lennox's inquisitive hit of 1992
39. Ardent
40. Pesky pet problems
41. Marcel Marceau's job title
42. "You're All __ Got Tonight" by The Cars
43. Military officer, e.g.
44. Ms. Winslet's
45. Grammar topic
47. Afraid
49. Twisted-apart cookie
51. Froms opposites
52. Gives birth
55. Is performing really well
58. Subatomic particle
60. Pinnacle
61. Queen Elizabeth's attendants
64. Allied group
65. Feed the poker kitty
66. Like a TV show that should have been airing: 2 wds.
67. Shakespeare play title starter
68. Madonna's "Live to __"
69. __ __ relax (Calm down)

DOWN
1. Fairytale accessory
2. Bow and what?
3. Album of 1984 by Canadian singing star Lee Aaron: 2 wds.
4. British novelist Ms. Bagnold
5. Wilmington's state [abbr.]
6. Mount Caubvick aka Mont d'__ (High peak on the Quebec/Labrador border)
7. Ms. Ephron
8. Laconically
9. Agreeable answer
10. Ten-plus-one
11. __ fide (In bad faith)
12. "__ take a few days." (Waiting-for-something time span)
13. Nastassja Kinski title role
18. Swag
19. Cornball
24. Insult in a hip way
26. Eyeballs
28. Vase variety
29. Daily commute delay cause: 2 wds.
31. Canadian comedy series which starred Don McKellar and Molly Parker: 2 wds.
32. Wistfully sighed phrase: 2 wds.
33. Caustics
34. Locomotes the slopes
35. Canadian comic actor Eugene
37. Showerer's dryer-offer: 2 wds.
40. Obsession, idee __
41. Avril's follower
43. Big
44. PC information units
46. Music chord types
48. Mrs. Chaplin (Charlie's last wife)
50. Speak out
53. "Are too." retort: 2 wds.
54. Musical repetition mark
55. Actress Jessica
56. Referee's decision
57. Matinee star
59. Global, for short
60. Suffix with 'Origin'
62. Roosted
63. Chg. card percentage

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
If you let things slip, you'll be struggling to catch up for the rest of the week. Stay on top of your workload, no matter how boring it may be.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You can get twice as much done in half the time it takes most other people but that doesn't mean you should. If anything you should be cutting back a bit now. Keep doing it all and others will expect it of you.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Why are some people so irritable? You won't change them, so don't waste time trying. Today's influences will bring out the worst in those who lack self-control, but it will bring out the best in you.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
The weather in your neck of the cosmic woods may get a bit blowy today but the long-term forecast is good, so sit tight and ride out the storm. Come the weekend your world will be a brighter and sunnier place.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You may be eager to show what you can do but you would be wise not to rush things. If you act too soon, you may only get half what you could have earned if you had waited a day.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Have a clear idea of what it is you are aiming for, otherwise you will waste a lot of time and energy on things that don't matter. Make a conscious decision not to get carried away.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
It may seem as if all sorts of things are going wrong at the moment but it isn't true — relatively speaking your life is a huge success. If you want to be inspired take a look at those who really do have to struggle to get things done.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Listen to friends today. They have a wealth of experience that can be used to sidestep the pitfalls that will appear along your path.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You can make a name for yourself but only if you are prepared to give up the things that are holding you back. Anything that takes up too much of time, or money, must go.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
If you're planning a trip check and make sure there's nothing that could hold you back. Allow more time for your journey. You'll reach your destination but it may take a while.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Is there some kind of conspiracy that is stopping you from reaching your goal? Maybe there is but more likely it's just your mind playing tricks on you. By all means be wary but don't make accusations.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
It is inevitable that you will encounter some kind of resistance. It may be emotional resistance or it may be physical but either way you'll have to find an alternative route.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

4				7				
	9		1		3			
		3				8		
	7		4				1	
5				9				7
	6				1		5	
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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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4	6	9	7	5	3	2	1	8
1	3	2	6	8	9	4	7	5
7	8	5	4	1	2	3	6	9
3	4	1	9	7	8	5	2	6
8	5	7	2	3	6	1	9	4
2	9	6	1	4	5	8	3	7
5	1	8	3	6	7	9	4	2
9	7	4	8	2	1	6	5	3
6	2	3	5	9	4	7	8	1

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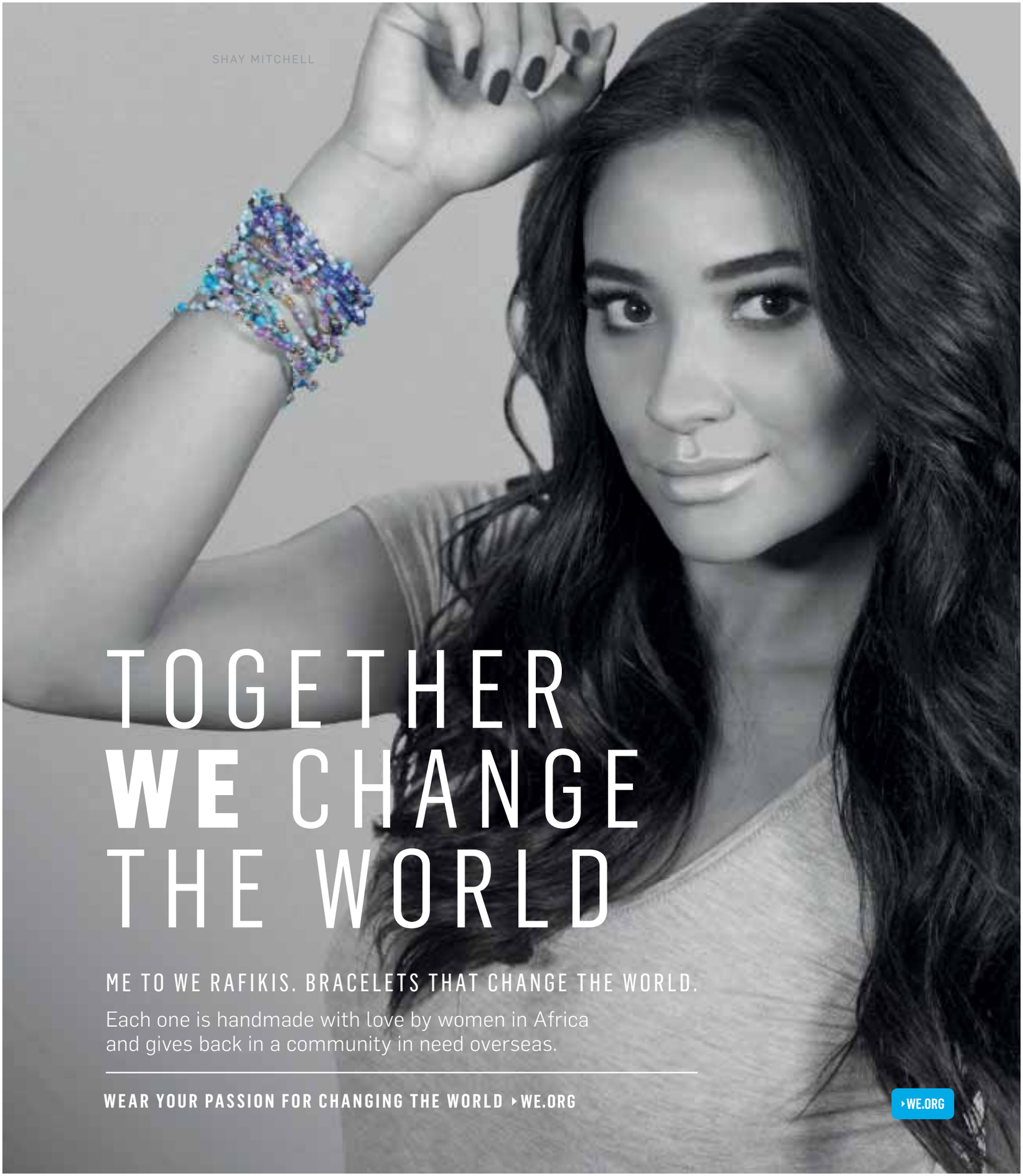
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